



Surrey Uni to open in India after UK PM's visit

Surrey joins new UK Universities in India Alliance while on UK trade mission to India

The UK's universities can be a "skills and research accelerator" for the potential of the strengthening UK-India trade partnership, which was the focus of Sir Keir Starmer's trade mission this week. This is according to Professor Stephen Jarvis, newly appointed President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Surrey – and a participant in the trade mission.

On his return from India, where the multi-sector delegation met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Professor Jarvis highlighted the strong fit of the University of Surrey's 'purpose-driven' approach to education and research, and the importance of the new Universities in India Alliance, which Surrey was proud to become a founder member of during the trip.

During the visit, the University of Surrey was presented with approval in principle from IFSCA (International Financial Services Centres Authority) to proceed with opening a new International Branch Campus at GIFT City, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat State.

On the trip, the University also celebrated its network of research and education partnerships with Indian universities – including its partnership with the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru (IISc) – which will see both institutions partner to drive research and innovation in semiconductor chip design and medical research, with a particular focus on human health and veterinary medicine.

Professor Stephen Jarvis said:

"I was honoured to be invited to join the Prime Minister on his visit to India to celebrate the enormous potential for UK higher education to partner and collaborate in India to drive international skills development and research to solve global challenges. India is an economic and skills superpower – it has its own thriving higher education sector, but also recognises the value that Britain's globally recognised higher education sector can bring to meeting the extraordinary growth in demand for quality education in India.

"As we move towards opening our new campus in GIFT City, we're delighted to have been invited to become founding members of the nine-strong UK Universities in India Alliance. Education is an immensely important export industry for the UK, and Surrey is proud to be standing shoulder to shoulder with our fellow universities, bringing our own unique brand of purposeful education, as we seek to expand the potential for higher education to be a skills and research accelerator, benefitting both the UK and Indian economies."

Alison Barrett MBE, Country Director India, British Council, said:

"Congratulations to the University of Surrey on receiving approval in principle from IFSCA (International Financial Services Centres Authority) to establish its International Branch Campus in GIFT City, Ahmedabad, India. This reflects the UK's commitment to accessible, innovative, and inclusive education, but also demonstrates the positive impact of the National Education Policy 2020. Aligned with the shared ambition outlined in the India-UK Vision 2035, bringing Surrey's expertise to India will create exciting new opportunities for students and equip them with the skills needed to thrive in the future."

Surrey University



Image: 09/10/2025. Mumbai, India. Prime Minister Keir Starmer meets Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a bilateral meeting at the Raj Bhavan. Picture by Simon Dawson / No 10 Downing Street

Surrey Uni finds gay vets face discrimination

A new study from the University of Surrey and the Royal Veterinary College has highlighted the ongoing presence of



discrimination and its impact on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and other (LGBT+) veterinary professionals and students in the UK.

The research, published in Vet Record, analysed 130 survey responses and found that over half (55.4%) of the participants had either experienced or witnessed some form of discrimination, ranging from microaggressions to outright threats of violence. This number highlights a concerning problem for LGBT+ veterinary professionals and students and a call to action for profession to collectively work to ensure everyone can work free from discriminatory behaviour.

The findings also reported that over half of the participants were not fully “out” to everyone at their workplace or place of study underlining that not all LGBT+ veterinary professionals and students feel safe or welcome to share who they are at work or study. However, in contrast, the positive findings from the study were that those who were “out” were more likely to report feeling supported at work and by the wider veterinary community.

Participants also cited a fear of negative repercussions on their career progression and educational attainment as a reason for not disclosing their identity. The study notes that such fear can lead to stress, anxiety and a sense of disconnection from colleagues.

Dr Charlotte S. McCarroll, Associate Head of School (Education) at the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Surrey, said:

“For our LGBT+ family, friends and colleagues, discrimination remains a pressing issue within the UK veterinary profession. More needs to be done by our institutions for these individuals to feel supported, including increasing and promoting support networks, improving education and training on anti-discrimination laws, and firmly promoting equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives.”

Dr Mat Hennessey, post-doctoral researcher in veterinary social science at the Royal Veterinary College, said:

“The findings of our study highlight the ongoing work which needs to occur, both in places of work and education, to foster inclusive environments which are supportive of all people. Creating such environments, where people can be their authentic selves without fear of discrimination, is a team effort requiring both institutional support for EDI initiatives and active engagement with the wider community.”

Peter Heather MRCVS, President of BVLGBT+ said:

“Within our profession there are many employers and colleagues who remain committed allies, but as this study shows, discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in the veterinary profession persists. To combat this, leaders in our profession need to educate others and themselves about discriminatory behaviour and learn more about the benefits of open and inclusive work and study environments that allow people to just be themselves.”

Surrey University



Epsom and Ewell's NESCOT plumbs the heights

Nescot's gas and plumbing apprenticeship provision has been awarded a City & Guilds End Point Assessment (EPA) plaque for excellence in apprenticeship delivery.

Elizabeth Akinlaja, City & Guilds Business Development Manager for London, Kent & Sussex, officially presented the award to Principal and CEO, Julie Kapsalis and the plumbing team at the college this week (Monday 22 September). She said: “Congratulations Nescot, it was a pleasure presenting the City & Guilds EPA Excellence plaque to the apprenticeship team. This award is for their dedication and commitment in supporting learners on their Building Services Engineering (BSE) apprenticeship provision, which has resulted in outstanding first-time pass rates, especially in plumbing, an area facing significant skills shortages. Well-done to everyone involved for making such a positive impact!”



Learners on the gas engineering apprenticeship, part of the plumbing apprenticeship department at Nescot achieved a 94% first time pass rate.

The award recognises excellence in Nescot's EPA delivery, which is the final stage of an apprenticeship designed to validate an apprentice's knowledge, skills, and behaviours against the required apprenticeship standard. It signifies the high quality and standard of the college's apprenticeship training, and celebrates the plumbing apprenticeship department's successful and impactful EPA achievements.

Liz Crawley, Head of School, Construction, Engineering & Automotive at Nescot, commented: "It's fantastic to receive such amazing feedback from City & Guilds. Our plumbing team work really hard to ensure the best possible outcomes for our apprentices and local employers."

Sarah Keith, Head of Apprenticeships at Nescot, added: "I am so proud of the teamwork at Nescot across all apprenticeships. This award is a testament to the benefits of working in a strong team that supports our apprentices, employers and each other. It means that our students are fully qualified and industry ready. Well-done to the plumbing team, and everyone involved in apprenticeships at Nescot."

The EPA Excellence award showcases Nescot's commitment to apprentice success and industry standards and reflects the wide range of apprenticeship training available at the college. At Nescot, we offer apprenticeships in carpentry and joinery, commercial catering, gas engineering, plumbing and heating, electrical installation, business administration, customer service, team leading and management, marketing executive, hairdressing, early years, health play specialists as well as laboratory scientists.

Explore the range of apprenticeship courses available on the Nescot website.

Photo: (centre left to right): Nescot Principal and CEO Julie Kapsalis receiving the City & Guilds EPA Award plaque from Elizabeth Akinlaja, City & Guilds Business Development Manager for London, Kent & Sussex along with the Nescot Plumbing team. Credit NESCOT

An EPA Plaque from City & Guilds is an award given to colleges and training providers to recognise their high-quality apprenticeship delivery and the success of their apprentices. The plaque highlights consistent excellence in End-Point Assessment (EPA) performance, based on factors like high pass rates and a large number of Distinction grades achieved by apprentices. It is also a recognition of staff dedication, guidance and support offered to learners.

NESCOT



Epsom and Ewell MP calls for SEND action

Helen Maguire MP for Epsom and Ewell renewed her call for immediate government action to address the crisis in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services, following her attendance at both the *Fight for Ordinary SEND* rally on Parliament Square and the Westminster Hall debate on *Children with SEND: Assessments and Support*, held on 15 September 2025.

At the Parliament Square rally, Ms. Maguire met with parents and carers who shared deeply troubling accounts, including cases in which children appear to have been removed from the register for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), despite ongoing and substantial need. Families also raised concerns about long waiting lists, lack of specialist provision, and inconsistent support from local authorities.

A key piece of evidence cited by rally-attendees relates to new findings from the *Centre for Justice Innovation* (CJI). According to CJI's literature review and follow-up research:

- A very high proportion of children who are sentenced by criminal courts have identified SEND. For example, one



statistic shows that **71%** of children sentenced between April 2019 and March 2020 had identified speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

- More broadly, children with SEND are significantly overrepresented throughout the youth justice system: amongst those cautioned or sentenced for offences (including serious violence), over **80%** have been recorded as ever having special educational needs; for prolific offenders it's even higher.
- Barriers to effective diversion have been consistently highlighted: children with communication or learning difficulties are less likely to be diverted out of the formal justice system because their needs are either unrecognised or misinterpreted as behavioural problems.
- The CJI reports that data on SEND in diversion programmes is patchy, with inconsistent recording, varying assessment tools, and a lack of standardisation, which obstructs accountability and improvement.

These findings underline how failures in early identification, assessment, and support not only impact children's education but may also increase risk of contact with the justice system.

Westminster Hall Debate & SEND Petition

The Westminster Hall debate *Children with SEND: Assessments and Support* took place, prompted by a petition titled "*Retain legal right to assessment and support in education for children with SEND*", which attracted over 122,000 signatures. The petition calls on the Government to maintain existing legal protections (including the EHCP process) and improve the timeliness and quality of assessments.

MPs from across parties spoke powerfully about how delays in EHCP assessment, weak enforcement, and underfunding are leaving children and families without vital support. Some remarked on whether changes being mooted to the law may reduce legal guarantees for EHCPs—something campaigners have strongly opposed.

Case Example from Helen Maguire in Debate

During the debate, Helen Maguire shared a case from her own constituency:

"Four-year-old Maeve lives in my constituency and has cerebral palsy. She requires constant care, is unable to walk, has limited speech and has multiple ongoing medical conditions that require attention. Despite that, and despite the fact that her parents applied to Surrey County Council almost a year ago, the council has refused to even assess her for an EHCP. She started school last week, but still does not have an agreed plan in place."

This story underlines how delays and refusal to assess are not abstract problems—they are happening now and affecting young children with complex needs.

What Must Be Done

Helen Maguire is calling on the Government to take the following measures urgently:

1. **Restore and protect the legal rights associated with EHCPs**, ensuring that children who need assessments receive them promptly, and that the process is enforced.
2. **Increase funding** to SEND services and local authorities, especially for specialist care, speech and language therapy, and other supports that are in short supply.
3. **Shorten waiting lists** and reduce the backlog of assessments, so that children are not forced to begin school (or continue schooling) without the plan and support they are legally entitled to.
4. **Ensure better data and transparency**, particularly in diversion and youth justice settings, so the over-representation of SEND children is properly understood and addressed.
5. **Improve training** among professionals in education, local government and justice system sectors so that SEND is identified and accommodated, not misinterpreted as misconduct or behavioural issues.



Helen Maguire MP said: "We are seeing families shattered by delays, by refusals to assess, by thousands of children starting school without the support they clearly need. The statistics show that without early intervention, children with SEND risk falling into a system that is not equipped for them. The Government must act now—not in months, but immediately—on funding, waiting lists, and legal rights. Our children deserve nothing less."

Sam Jones - Reporter



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Surrey Uni studies the climate friendly way to grow our lettuces

Vertical farming has been hailed as a futuristic answer to Britain's food security challenges – but a new study led by the University of Surrey suggests the picture is more complicated.

The research, published in *Food and Energy Security*, found that while vertical farms can deliver extraordinary crop yields and use far less water than traditional fields, their carbon footprint still exceeds that of soil-based farming.

What is vertical farming?

Unlike conventional agriculture, vertical farms grow crops indoors, often in stacked trays under carefully controlled light, temperature and humidity. Plants are usually grown without soil, using hydroponic or aeroponic systems that deliver nutrients directly to their roots. This means vertical farms can operate in cities, warehouses, or disused buildings – and, crucially, they are not dependent on weather or seasons.

Proponents argue that this approach could free up farmland for nature, cut transport emissions by producing food closer to consumers, and help guarantee supplies as climate change disrupts traditional growing regions.

The Surrey-led study

The University of Surrey team compared lettuce grown in a commercial UK vertical farm with lettuce from two UK field farms – one on mineral soil and one on peat – and with Spanish farms, which supply around 95% of Britain's winter lettuce.

They found that vertical farms can produce more than 20 times the yield of field farms: around 97 kilograms of lettuce per square metre, compared with just 3.3 kilograms outdoors. Water use is also dramatically lower, at 0.9 m³/kg compared with up to 7.3 m³/kg in Spain.

But the greenhouse gas emissions are still higher. Even when powered by renewable energy, vertically farmed lettuce produced about 0.93 kg of greenhouse gases per kilogram, compared with 0.57 kg from UK field farms.

Energy and materials the key hurdles

Much of the carbon burden comes from the heavy energy demands of lighting and climate control, as well as the jute fibre plugs

used to support plant roots. Researchers estimate that swapping these for alternatives such as coconut coir could cut the land footprint of vertical farms by more than 95%.

Michael Gargaro, Postgraduate Researcher at Surrey's Centre for Environment and Sustainability and lead author of the study, said:

"Vertical farming has the potential to transform food security in the UK, particularly as climate change and seasonal drought place growing pressure on traditional agriculture. Our research shows that while the technology can bring far higher yields and reduce water use, it currently comes with a higher carbon cost. The challenge now is to make vertical farming more energy-efficient and better integrated with renewable systems, so that it can become a truly sustainable solution."

Dr Zoe M Harris, Director of the Centre and Co-Director of the Institute for Sustainability, added:

"With around 95 per cent of lettuce imported from Spain during the winter months, advances in vertical farming make it possible to secure a year-round supply of fresh produce while freeing up land for restoration. But to viably compete with field farming, vertical farms must cut their energy use and rethink the materials they rely on."

Can vertical farms really feed the UK?

The study concludes that vertical farms are not yet the most sustainable option for lettuce. But with further innovation – particularly in energy efficiency and material use – they could become an essential part of Britain's food system. For now, they remain a promising supplement to, rather than a replacement for, traditional farming.

The research was funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).

New Centre at Nescot gives vision impaired students "the best of both worlds"

A new Centre of Excellence for vision impaired young people has opened at the North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) in Ewell.

The initiative is run by the Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC), which has until now only operated its post-16 education hub at Dorton College in Orpington, Bromley. The Surrey launch marks the charity's first step in expanding its unique "hybrid" model of education beyond London.

A hybrid model of learning

The RSBC approach combines mainstream college life with specialist support tailored to blind and partially sighted students aged 16 to 25. Lessons at Nescot are shared with RSBC staff in advance, allowing them to adapt materials into Braille, large print, coloured text or raised diagrams.

Students also take specialist sessions in Braille, mobility and assistive technology, supported by dedicated Learning Support Assistants. The aim is not only academic success, but building the confidence and independence to prepare for adult life.

Under the model, learners divide their time between their local college and the RSBC hub. It is a system that has delivered strong results in Orpington, where 98% of students achieve good educational outcomes despite half having previously experienced unsuccessful placements elsewhere.

Partnership with Nescot and Surrey County Council

Julie Kapsalis, Principal and Chief Executive of Nescot, said:

"We are delighted to partner with RSBC to host the new Centre of Excellence. Our college community is enriched by its diversity, and we believe all young people should be able to access quality education and support. This partnership is a fantastic step forward."

RSBC Education Director and Executive Principal Josie Grainger-Francova added:

"Young people with vision impairment are so often excluded from the full education experience. Combining RSBC's specialist



expertise with Nescot's broad curriculum and inclusive environment, we're creating a blueprint for what high-quality, person-centred provision should look like. We're proud to be expanding and supporting even more young people to thrive."

From Surrey County Council, Eamonn Gilbert, Assistant Director for SEND Commissioning, said:

"The new Centre of Excellence marks a significant step forward in how we support learners with visual impairments in Surrey. RSBC's proven track record, combined with Nescot's welcoming and ambitious culture, creates an exciting new post-16 offer for young people with visual impairments."

A student view

For learners like 19-year-old Lee Roake, the new centre is already making a difference. He said:

"It's so much more convenient for me to travel to Nescot - previously, I had to commute four hours a day to college. It's a really inclusive space and I'm supported to be as independent as possible. It's nice to meet people who are similar to me, too. For me, it's the best of both worlds."

About the organisations

The Royal Society for Blind Children is the only specialist post-16 education provider for vision impaired young people in London and the South East. More details: www.rsbc.org.uk

Nescot, based in Ewell, provides a wide range of further and higher education courses from vocational training to degree-level programmes. More details: www.nescot.ac.uk

Surrey expansion of SEN places

An 'Outstanding' Surrey school could open a new satellite site at another primary- around eight miles away.

Surrey County Council has revealed plans to expand a top-rated school for children with severe learning difficulties. Woodlands School, in Leatherhead, could have a second location at Cranmere Primary and Nursery school in Esher - a mere 25-30 minute drive away.

The move would create up to 28 extra places for children with severe learning difficulties and autism, all of whom have an Education, Health Care and Plans (EHCPs).

Currently Woodlands only has room for 83 pupils - though it has been squeezing in an extra 16 thanks to temporary classrooms.

Meanwhile Cranmere Primary, which has been rated 'Good' by Ofsted, has been running under capacity for years because of falling birthrates, council documents state. The building can take 630 pupils, but numbers have dipped enough there's now space to share.

The part of the Cranmere site earmarked for the expansion will need adapting so it can properly meet the needs of Woodlands pupils, according to reports. The work is said to have been planned to take place over the summer holidays, ready for a gradual roll-out of places from October 2025.

Surrey County Council says the set-up makes sense both for families and the budget. Officers say having local specialist places means children do not have to travel far away to school.

By providing places within the state system, the council's education bill drops and saves money for the taxpayer. Should these pupils be required to attend an education provision in the independent sector, costs would equate to around £1.484m per year every year. This is compared to the average cost for state-maintained specialist places of £644k.

Staff at the new site will be employed directly by Woodlands School and numbers will grow slowly over time, depending on demand.

The council says the move is part of its wider ambition to increase high-quality specialist school places across Surrey as the number of children with EHCPs continues to rise- with a 10 per cent increase expected over the next five years.

The current stage of the consultation will close on Friday 5 September 2025

Outside Woodlands School, Leatherhead. (Credit: Google Street View)



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Prostate cancer vaccine research launched in Surrey

In September 2025, The Prostate Project, a Guildford-based volunteer-led charity, will launch a £250,000 campaign to raise funds for a prostate cancer research project widely anticipated to be 'game-changing'.

Work has begun to develop a vaccine to prevent the return of prostate cancer in men who have undergone a radical prostatectomy, the surgical removal of the prostate. Cancer vaccines have become an exciting area of research in recent years, and this new treatment could potentially save the lives of more than 1,500 men each year in the UK alone.

The Prostate Project, based at the Stokes Centre for Urology at Royal Surrey County Hospital, has a proven track record of funding research and treatment of prostate cancer, raising more than £11 million since its formation in 1998.

During this time the charity has provided funds for research at the University of Surrey, leading directly to breakthroughs in the diagnosis and treatment of prostate and other urological cancers. The university team is one of the leading groups for immunotherapy research in the UK, and is recognised around the world for its work.

This latest initiative is part of the charity's longstanding and ongoing support for the work of Dr. Nicola Annels and Dr. Guy Simpson and their team based at the University of Surrey.

A patent has been applied for the vaccine and Dr. Simpson has already proven that it works in the similar treatment of bladder cancer. This new research is required to see if the vaccine works as effectively for prostate cancer patients.

Dr. Guy Simpson, Research Fellow Oncology at the University of Surrey explains:

'The research will focus on a 'prime-boost' vaccine strategy. The new cancer-killing virus, known as HSV5-15 developed by our team at the University of Surrey will be used as an immune 'priming' vaccine along with a prostate specific mRNA vaccine to 'boost' and maintain this immune response against the prostate.

mRNA vaccines have already proven to be revolutionary in preventing COVID, and this technology is promising similarly effective results in treating cancer tumours.

The vaccine trains the body's immune system to recognise cancer cells so any that return after surgery can be hunted down and killed, reducing the risk of the disease coming back. Around 5,000 radical prostatectomies are performed each year in the UK, but between 20% and 50% of men who have their prostates removed will have their cancer return, resulting in them undergoing further radiotherapy and/or hormone therapy.

This treatment is costly, time-consuming and can have unpleasant side effects, and is not always completely successful.'

Prostate Project Chairman, Martin Davies, expands on the fundraising initiative:

'For over 25 years the Prostate Project has been proud to support a team that is quite rightly recognised by their peers for their work in immunology research, and this latest initiative is perhaps the most important yet. We are looking to raise £250,000, a target that we recognise as ambitious but completely achievable, especially given our past record, and the significance of the potential outcome.'

A final word from Dr. Simpson on the timescales for delivery.

'This funding will support the initial 18 month research period, but the more money that we raise will have a significant effect on timescales.'

The Prostate Project website www.prostate-project.org.uk features a comprehensive FAQ page with answers to many of the questions about the vaccine and details of how to donate.



Epsom schools celebrate GCSE results

Epsom schools have been celebrating another strong year of GCSE results, with both Glyn School and Rosebery School reporting exceptional performances from the Class of 2025.

At **Glyn School**, 86% of students achieved grade 4 or above in English and Maths, with 66% reaching grade 5 or above. Disadvantaged pupils also excelled, with 84% attaining grade 4 or better in the core subjects. Among the top performers were Joshua Ellis (eight grade 9s and three grade 8s), William Unsworth (eight grade 9s), and Frederick Browning (eight grade 9s). Twins Hamish and Oscar Donald also secured a string of solid passes, while Chelsea Football Club player Reggie Walsh managed to complete seven GCSEs alongside making his debut for the club's first team.

Students reflected on the hard work behind their achievements, with Nicholas Cooper noting: *"It was hard work but worth it,"* and Joshua Ellis adding: *"I'm really happy with my results, and I want to thank my teachers for helping me achieve them."*

Headteacher Jo Garrod praised the determination of staff and pupils, while James Nicholson, CEO of GLF Schools, described the outcomes across the trust as "a fantastic set of GCSE results."

Meanwhile, at **Rosebery School**, the celebrations were equally jubilant. One in three exam entries was awarded a top grade 9 or 8, and half of all results fell between grades 9 and 7. Ninety-one per cent of students achieved grade 4 or higher in both English and Maths, and more than 80% reached grade 5 or above. In Maths and Science alone, Rosebery girls achieved 128 grade 9s.

Individual highlights included Iris Aryeetey and Eilidh McFarlane, who each achieved ten grade 9s, while twins Grace and Hannah Black amassed a remarkable 15 grade 9s and five grade 8s between them.

The school's overall performance set new records, with an average grade of 6.4 and an Attainment 8 score of 64. Headteacher David Lach said the results placed the cohort among the top 5% of schools nationally and praised both staff and pupils for their resilience during what he described as a "tragic and difficult academic year."

With both schools celebrating record results following last week's strong A Level outcomes, Epsom students appear to be ending the summer term on a high.

Related reports:

Epsom's boys' and girls' schools celebrate A level results

Photo: Rosebery girls celebrate. Credit: GLF Schools

Let your A level winners be creative says Epsom's Arts University

Ahead of A-level results day and Clearing, University for the Creative Arts (UCA) has written an open letter to parents and carers asking them not to discourage their children from making the creative choice and ultimately pursuing their dreams this week.

UCA writes on behalf of the children that came before, those that didn't choose games over geography, marketing over medicine or animation over accounting due to pressure from their parents and carers, of which there are many examples posted on the online community, The Student Room. *"I'm honestly just doing linguistics for my parents. They expect me to get a 'good' degree, to get a secure job - they think working in the film industry won't get me anywhere."*

The University, which for nearly 170 years has delivered creative education, acknowledges it's only natural for parents and carers to feel uncertain when children say they want to pursue a creative subject. *"We understand the hopes and concerns that come with guiding children's higher education and subject choice. Parents and carers want the best for them - a secure future,"* says UCA's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Melanie Gray.

This is reinforced in UCAS' Project Next Generation report, which states parents want to guide their children towards the pathways that have the best capacity for earning and stability. As a result, almost half (48%) of children in the report, agreed that they feel pressure from parents to make 'good' decisions about their education.



UCA reassures in the letter that 'a creative choice is a career choice,' with the creative industries worth £124 billion a year to the UK economy and support more than 2.4 million jobs. Long-term, the sector is also part of the Government's modern Industrial Strategy - a 10-year plan backing the UK's strengths with ambitions for eight high-growth sectors, aiming to increase productivity and create jobs.

Professor Gray, adds: *"With this letter we're not reprimanding parents and carers, we're simply asking them to support their children and have confidence in them choosing what they love. We have seen time and time again, children not pursuing their creative dreams, which now more than ever, have a secure future."*

UCAS' report acknowledges parents and carers play a pivotal role in the crucial choices children make about their future. It also shows children's higher education choices are inspired by their passions. Support and reassurance, not pressure, is needed to empower children in their decision making.

Support ahead of A-level results day and Clearing is available on UCA's dedicated webpage, uca.ac.uk/clearing for parents and carers, as well as those wanting to make the creative choice. On Friday 15 and Saturday 16 August, the University also welcomes anyone to tour its campuses and ask staff and current students questions. For those not yet applied through Clearing, Staff will also make on-the-spot offers to those suitable.

Image: Student work by UCA BA Graphic Ryon Pattison